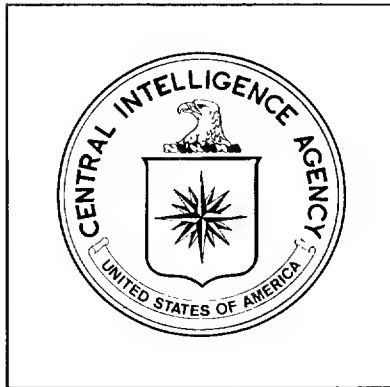


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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Ghana

Government Structure May be Revamped

Junta leader Colonel Acheampong will soon unveil a sweeping restructuring of Ghana's three-year-old military government, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Acheampong apparently hopes the move will shore up the regime's flagging support in the armed forces and reverse the impression of drift conveyed by the government's performance in recent months. Implementation of the plan, however, could encounter resistance from three key officers on the present ruling body who collaborated with Acheampong in the 1972 coup. Their relations with Acheampong have become somewhat strained lately and they would be downgraded significantly in the new set up.

[REDACTED] the government is to be patterned loosely after that of Nigeria. Achmeapong will head a new supreme military council that is to include the chief of the defense staff, service and police heads, and 20 to 25 younger officers drawn from the ranks. The present 10-man ruling military council will be reconstituted with no policy making role and will be charged with overseeing the operation of government ministries.

The plan also provides for an institutional procedure for removing the head of state by unanimous vote of the supreme military council. The intent evidently is to reduce the possibility that disgruntled elements may be tempted to resort to a coup d'etat to redress their grievances. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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Bangladesh

Regime Tries Some Image Building

The new regime is taking steps designed to distinguish it from the [REDACTED] government of former president Mujib and to project an image of a decisive, honest government with a concern for civil liberties. At the same time, the new leaders in Dacca have clearly demonstrated there are limits on how far they will go for now in liberalizing the system--a reserve that may be a reflection of concern over internal security.

The regime has moved at a cautious pace, however. This may be due in part to the quiescent but still unresolved leadership dispute among military and civilian figures in the government. The regime may also have had difficulty in formulating policy in the short time since the coup; the coup leaders had no clear goals at the time they took over other than the removal of Mujib.

The most recent moves by President Mushtaque's regime have included a decision to review the cases of those arbitrarily removed from the military under Mujib. This week the government also made some modest economic moves, such as price reductions for cloth and cement and the easing of some distribution controls. Dacca has still not made any dramatic economic decisions, except for some politically motivated steps shortly after the coup, which included blocking the bank accounts of Mujib and some of his associates.

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The new regime's other positive steps have included:

- the arrest of allegedly corrupt officials of the Mujib government and his now defunct party;
- the return to their owners of two popular newspapers nationalized by Mujib last June;
- the repeal of an order by Mujib sanctioning the dismissal of civil servants without cause or appeal;
- the offer of a general amnesty to all those who turn in illegally held arms by this weekend.

Along with these moves, the government has placed certain limits on civil liberties. It has banned all political parties and has promulgated tough martial law regulations under which there have been several convictions. There is also speculation that the government may reimpose a strict curfew in Dacca after the amnesty expires to facilitate raids by government security forces on the university and other places where the government suspects arms have been cached. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Bangladesh-USSR

Aircraft Negotiations Resumed

Bangladesh will continue to depend on the USSR for aircraft even though the new government has stepped back a bit from Mujib's close relations with the Soviets. [REDACTED] negotiations on aircraft that were in progress with the USSR at the time of the coup on August 15 have been resumed.

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[REDACTED]

Moscow apparently is willing to continue to supply Dacca with aircraft, despite misgivings about the orientation of the new regime. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD/BACKGROUND USE ONLY/CONTROLLED DISSEM)

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